

This record is a partial extract of the original cable. The full text of the original cable is not available.

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 HARARE 002017

SIPDIS

DEPT FORM AF/PDPA FOR DALTON, MITCHELL AND SIMS
AF FOR RAYNOR
NSC FOR JENDAYI FRAZER
LONDON FOR GURNEY
PARIS FOR NEARY
NAIROBI FOR PFLAUMER

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PREL](#) [ZI](#)

SUBJECT: MEDIA REPORT MOYO THREATENS INDEPENDENT NEWSPAPERS
AND STUDIO7; HARARE

11. The independent press in Zimbabwe, including the Voice of America's (VOA) Studio 7 - a program that features the latest developments in Zimbabwe - have become endangered projects following Information Minister Jonathan Moyo's threats to ban the news organizations last week. According to a lead article carried in the October 5 edition of the independent weekly "The Standard" (circulation 45 - 50,000 copies), Moyo and the Media and Information Chairman Tafataona Mahoso "have turned their guns at 'The Standard' and 'The Zimbabwe Independent,'" including "Studio 7." Both newspapers are registered with the Media and Information Commission. On the same vein, the lead story in the October 5 edition of the government-controlled weekly "The Sunday Mail" warns against any efforts to come to the rescue of the Associated Newspapers of Zimbabwe (ANZ), saying such moves "could jeopardize any chances of the 'Daily News' being registered if it re-applies again." Excerpts of the articles follow:

12. Under headline "The Standard Threatened: 'We are coming to you,' says Mahoso," the independent weekly "The Standard" (10/05) carried the following lead article by Caiphaz Chimhete:

"After shutting down 'The Daily News' and 'The Daily News on Sunday,' Junior Information Minister Jonathan Moyo and Media and Information Commission chairman Tafataona Mahoso say they have turned their guns at 'The Standard' and 'The Zimbabwe Independent.' Ranting and raving at the official launch of New ZIANA. . . an agitated Moyo made it clear that after the closure of the two ANZ titles, he was now after 'The Standard' and 'The Zimbabwe Independent,' two newspapers he called 'running dogs of imperialism.' A highly charged Moyo said the type of 'trash' published by the newspapers, both owned by the same company, would not be published anywhere overseas. 'They call the President (Mugabe) a thief. Why don't they say (United States President) George Bush is a thief and (British Prime Minister) Tony Blair is a thief? If we were serious people, who do not want to apologize for who we are. . . really we would shut these papers down because they are trash, they injure our national interest,' ranted Moyo, who incidentally only gained national prominence in the 1980s and 1990s by writing his anti-Mugabe and anti-ZANU PF tirades in the private media. Moyo also pronounced the 'death' of Studio 7, a VOA news broadcasting station that beams to Zimbabwe. 'Studio 7 will die. It faces death. They think we are sleeping, we want to see where they are going with Studio 7,' said Moyo. . . ."

13. Under headline "Underground forces move to 'Daily News' the government-controlled weekly 'The Sunday Mail' carried the following lead story:

"The British High Commission and a host of other organizations are clandestinely trying to assist the Associated Newspapers of Zimbabwe (ANZ) by pouring funds and coming up with 'illegal' arrangements to help the journalists at the two ANZ papers, it has emerged. It is understood that these moves being orchestrated by the British High Commission and the Media Institute of Southern Africa, with funding from organizations like the Konrad Adenauer Foundation, the British Council and the United States Agency for International Development, could jeopardize any chances of the Daily News being registered if it re-applies again. . . ."

14. Meanwhile, Information Minister Jonathan Moyo has distanced the government from the closure of "The Daily News," declaring that "The Daily News" was a "victim of the rule of law." Under headline "Daily News a victim of rule of law: Moyo" the October 4 edition of the government-controlled daily "The Herald" (circulation 50 - 70,000) carried the

following article on page one:

"Government did not shut down the `The Daily News,' it was a victim of the rule of law that the paper had been preaching about since its inception in 1999, the Minister of State for Information and Publicity, Professor Jonathan Moyo, said (on October 3). Speaking at the launch of the New ZIANA in Harare, Prof. Moyo said `The Daily News' believed itself to be above the law, and a law unto itself, so it decided not to register with the Media and Information Commission as stipulated by the law. `The Daily News' is a victim of the rule of law which it had been preaching since 1999,' said Prof. Moyo. . .Prof. Moyo said the ANZ issue would continue to be dealt with according to the law and no amount of pressure or political interference would be entertained. `We will not entertain any pressure from anybody because we respect the law,' he said. . . ."

SULLIVAN